

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 430 302

EA 029 826

AUTHOR Walters, Thomas P.; Walters, Rita Tyson
TITLE Catechetical Leaders: A Statistical Profile. A Follow-up Study to the 1986-1992 Progressive Study of Parish Directors of Religious Education Training and Educational Needs.
INSTITUTION National Catholic Educational Association, Washington, DC.
ISBN ISBN-1-55833-200-6
PUB DATE 1998-00-00
NOTE 34p.
AVAILABLE FROM National Catholic Educational Association, Publications Dept., 1077 30th Street, NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20007-3852; Web site: <http://www.ncea.org>
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Numerical/Quantitative Data (110)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Catholic Educators; Catholic Schools; Elementary Secondary Education; Employment Patterns; National Surveys; *Personnel Data; Profiles; *School Personnel; Trend Analysis
IDENTIFIERS *Catechesis; *Directors of Religious Education

ABSTRACT

This statistical profile is a followup to a previous National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors' (NPCD) study of catechetical leadership. Since 1985, the NPCD, which is a professional association of approximately 1,700 parish catechetical/religious education leaders, has surveyed parish Directors to profile their training and educational needs. The results in this current profile were obtained from 753 questionnaires. The findings offer a wide variety of information on catechetical leaders. Included are statistics on gender, age, marital status, years as catechetical leader, years in present parish, manner of employment, months of the year employed, salaries, salary satisfaction, benefits, preparation for catechetical leadership, degree majors, degrees being pursued, and areas of responsibility in the parish. Also included in the study is information on religious education budgets and the percentage of parish budget allocated for parish religious education programs and parochial schools. The findings present details on catechetical effectiveness, catechetical concerns, and NPCD services. A final section analyzes popular beliefs about directors, such as the notion that directors of religious education are an aging population. The study concludes that earlier trends, such as steady increases in salaries and men receiving higher salaries than women, continue. Overall, catechetical leaders shared optimism about the future of catechetical education. (RJM)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

EA

ED 430 302

Catechetical Leaders: A Statistical Profile

A follow-up study to the 1986-1992
Progressive Study of Parish Directors
of Religious Education Training and
Educational Needs

Thomas P. Walters
Rita Tyson Walters

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- ☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- ☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

P. Kokus

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1



National Catholic Educational Association

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

2

EA 029826

Catechetical Leaders: A Statistical Profile

**A follow-up study to the 1986-1992
Progressive Study of Parish Directors
of Religious Education Training and
Educational Needs**

**Thomas P. Walters
Rita Tyson Walters**



National Catholic Educational Association

Copyright 1998
National Catholic Educational Association
1077 30th Street, NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20007-3852

ISBN 1-55833-200-6

Table of Contents

Foreword	iv
PART ONE—The Study	1
PART TWO—Catechetical Leaders	2
PART THREE—Parish Religious Education Budgets	13
PART FOUR—Catechetical Effectiveness	15
PART FIVE—Catechetical Concerns	17
PART SIX—NPCD Services	18
PART SEVEN—Popular Beliefs Revisited	19
PART EIGHT—Conclusion	23
APPENDIX—NPCD Membership Questionnaire, 1996	24

Foreword

Catechetical Leaders: A Statistical Profile is a follow-up to a previous National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors' (NPCD) study of catechetical leadership which extended from 1986 to 1992 and resulted in the publication of *A Hopeful Horizon—A Progressive Study of parish DREs' Training and Educational Needs* (1993). It represents the on-going efforts of the NPCD to provide "an up-to-date statistical profile of its membership and to gain some insight into how these catechetical leaders view current efforts to train catechists and to effectively hand on the Catholic tradition."

Founded by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) in 1976, the NPCD is the professional association of approximately 1,700 parish catechetical/religious education leaders working in parish programs throughout the United States. While not all parish religious education leaders belong to the NPCD, the membership does represent the geographic range of the continental United States, a variety of population densities, and a great deal of economic diversity. *Catechetical Leaders: A Statistical Profile*, while it cannot claim to be a statistically representative sample of all who are involved in administering and directing parish catechetical programs, is a national portrait of those who are locally responsible for the design and implementation of the Church's formal efforts to share the light of faith in parishes throughout the country.

This text is the fruit of the labors of many persons. As was the case with the previous study, this project would have never happened without support and participation of the members of the National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors and the financial support provided by the Board of the Michael J. McGiveney Fund. In addition, two persons, Thomas and Rita Walters, carried out important roles with great enthusiasm and expertise as the researchers and the authors of the text. I think that you will agree that the material is concise and understandable. Also, there are a number of behind the scenes persons who deserve recognition, in particular, Edward Lewandowski, Kathleen Burton, SSJ, Deborah Shaffer, Daniel Schwieterman, Dr. Barbara Campbell, Phyllis Kokus, Beatriz Ruiz, Bernadette Laniak and Steve Palmer.

In closing, on behalf of the NPCD members, may this text serve as a sign of hope and recognition of God's spirit at work through the thousands of parish directors of religious education, coordinators and catechists who are truly about "Sharing and Living the Good News!"

Lent, 1998

Robert Colbert
Executive Director
Department of Religious Education

PART ONE –The Study

The National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors (NPCD) is the largest director of religious education (DRE) membership organization in the United States. The Association is open to any "religious educator administering parish catechetical and religious education programs." In 1985 the NPCD initiated a progressive study of parish DREs profiling their training and educational needs. To cover the costs of the research, monies were sought and graciously given on three separate occasions from the Michael J. McGivney Fund. The results of this study were reported in *A Hopeful Horizon: A Progressive Study of Parish DREs' Training and Education Needs* published by the National Catholic Educational Association in 1993.

Early in 1996 the leadership of NPCD decided to revisit *A Hopeful Horizon*. They did so in order to continue their commitment to maintain an up-to-date statistical profile of their membership and to gain some insight into how these catechetical leaders view current efforts to train catechists and to effectively hand on the Catholic tradition.

In November of 1996 a questionnaire similar to the ones used in the Progressive Study was mailed to all NPCD members. One thousand six hundred fifty-eight questionnaires were mailed. Seven hundred fifty-three were returned (45%).

What follows are the results of this survey. The report concludes by revisiting in light of the current findings what were identified in *A Hopeful Horizon* as popular beliefs about parish catechetical leaders and parish religious education programs.

A copy of the survey questionnaire is included in the Appendix.

PART TWO – Catechetical Leaders

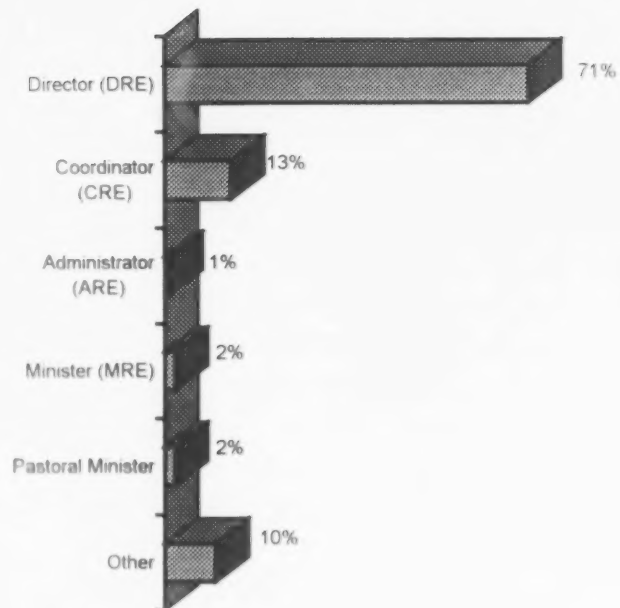
- Gender



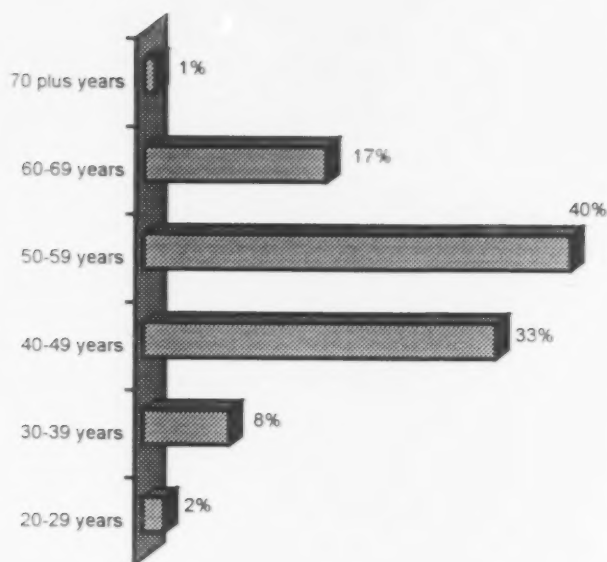
Since 1992 there has been no change in the percentage of men and women who are members of NPCD. The percentage has remained constant since the early 1980s.

- Title

The title of more than 70% of the NPCD members is Director of Religious Education or DRE. The other titles, while they have been around for some time, have not caught on. Interestingly, even though most directors and coordinators would agree that they are technically involved in the catechetical ministry, "religious education" is still the defining term in their title.



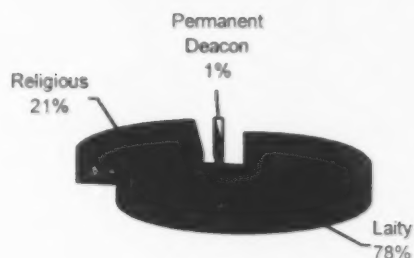
• Age Range



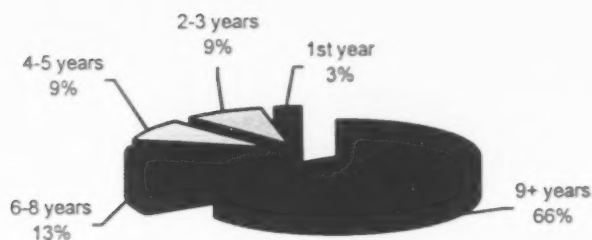
The age range for almost three-fourths of the NPCD members is 40-59 years. This percentage has remained relatively constant for the seven years of the Progressive Study in which, on average, almost three-fourths of the membership fell into this age range.

• Marital and Ecclesial Status

The laity constitute the highest percentage of NPCD members, and the majority of these members are married women. The trend that is shown in *A Hopeful Horizon* of more and more married catechetical leaders continues. The percentage of NPCD members who are priests is less than one percent.

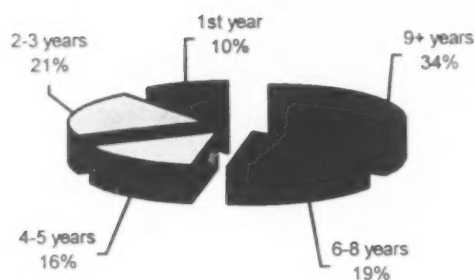


• Years as Catechetical Leader



Two-thirds of the respondents in this study have been catechetical leaders for more than nine years; 49% have served in the catechetical ministry from nine to twenty years and 17% for more than twenty years.

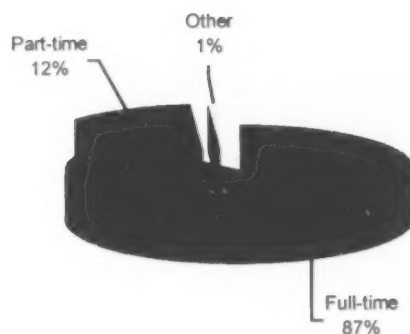
• Years in Present Parish



More than two-thirds of the respondents have been in their present parish position for four or more years.

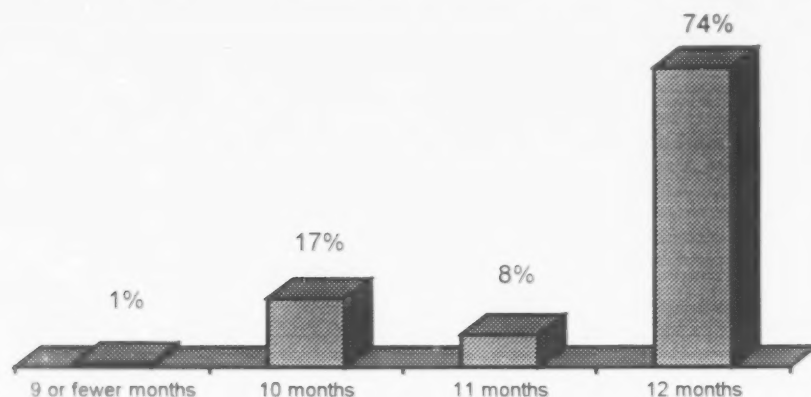
• Manner of Employment

Eighty-seven percent of the NPCD members work full-time (paid based on working 40 hours or more a week). This percentage has remained stable since 1986.



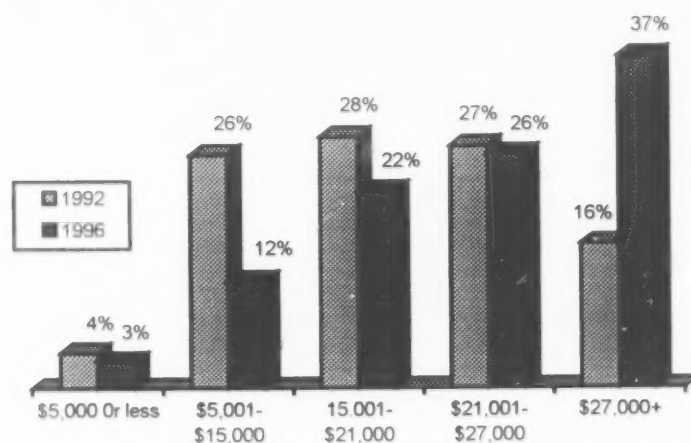
• Months of the Year Employed

The percentage of NPCD members working twelve months of the year has steadily increased from 68% in 1986 to 74% in 1996.



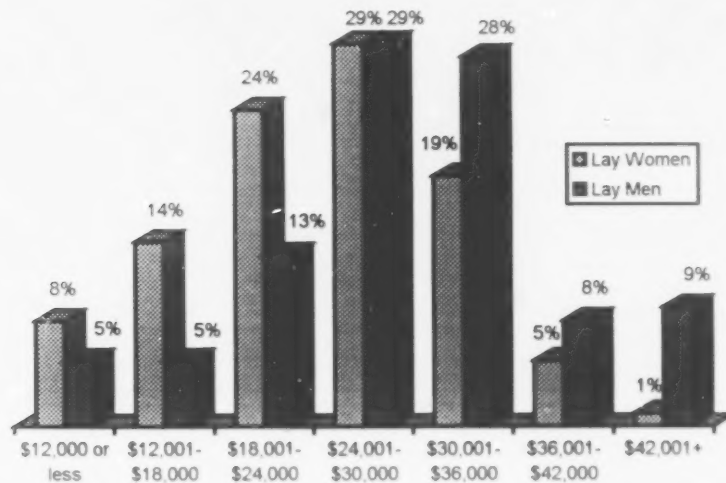
• Salaries

Since 1992 there has been a steady increase in base salaries. Thirty-seven percent of the NPCD members have salaries that exceed \$27,000 in 1996 as compared to only 16% in 1992. The salary earned is the primary family income for 71% of the lay men and for 32% of the lay women.



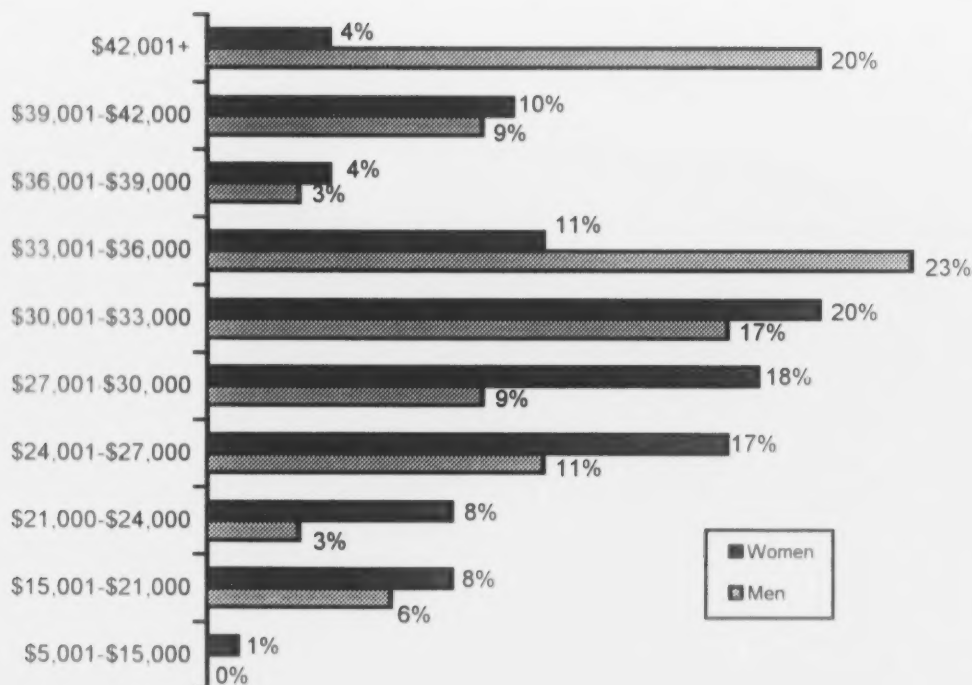
• Highest Salaries

As in *A Hopeful Horizon*, the salaries of lay men continue to be in the higher ranges. Forty-five percent of the men's salaries are more



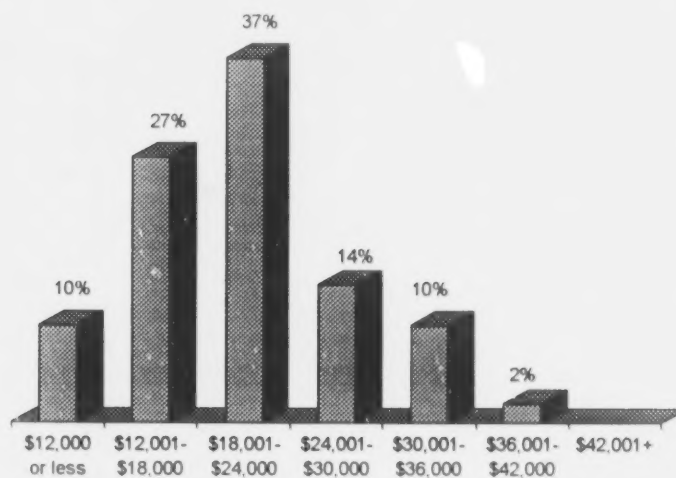
than \$30,000 per year as compared to 25% of the lay women and 12% of the religious women. However, it should be noted that 66% of the men have masters or doctoral degrees as compared to 50% of the women.

The following chart compares the salaries of men and women, who work full-time, have masters' degrees, and indicate that their salary is the primary family income. At the upper level of the salary scale, 20% of the men as compared to 4% of the women make salaries in excess of \$42,000. This percentage difference (16%) is higher than it was in 1992 when the difference was 9% (51% of the men and 42% of the women were in the higher salary ranges).



• Lowest Salaries

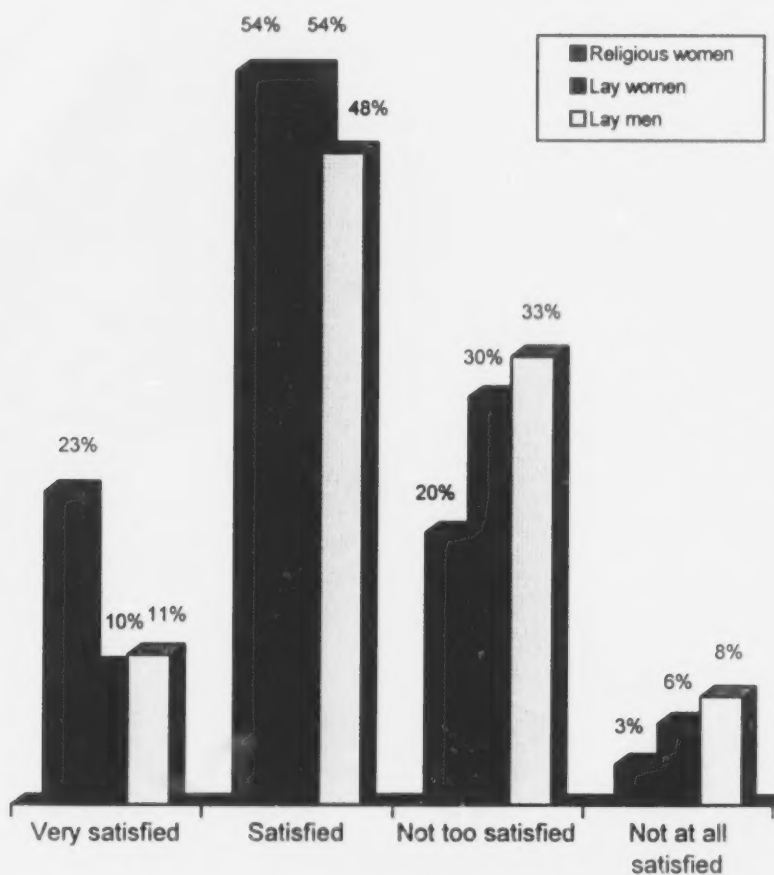
The lowest salaries continue to be those of religious women. Seventy-four percent receive salaries that are at or below \$24,000 per year as



compared to 46% of the lay women and 25% of the lay men. These lower salaries are supplemented for some of the religious women through housing (59%) and car (46%) allowances.

• Salary Satisfaction

Salary satisfaction varies according to gender and ecclesial status. It is also in inverse relationship to what one is paid. Religious sisters, who have the lowest salaries, are the most satisfied with 77% indicating they are *satisfied* or *very satisfied*. They are followed by lay women (64%) and lay men (59%).



• Benefits

There are two new benefits that were not included in the 1992 survey – continuing education allowance and life insurance. With the exception of *travel allowance, car and other benefits*, there has been an increase in the percentage of catechetical leaders receiving each of the benefits listed.

Benefits Available in the Employing Parish	
Medical Insurance	82%
Paid Vacation	77%
Retirement Plan	75%
Professional Memberships	74%
Continuing Education Allowance	69%
Sick Leave Plan	62%
Dental Insurance	53%
Life Insurance	44%
Retreat Allowance	41%
Travel Allowance	35%
Housing or Allowance	14%
Car	11%
Other Benefits	3%

• Best Preparation for Catechetical Leadership

Coming up through the ranks is still considered by the membership to be the best preparation for ministry as a catechetical leader. This is followed closely by college and university courses. This is the same order as in *A Hopeful Horizon*, but the percentages have increased by 6% for those indicating formal schooling as the best preparation, and by 9% for those who consider working with other DREs or catechetical leaders as the best preparation. Coming up through the ranks has dropped 13% since 1992. As in the previous surveys, those indicating "other" most often cite teaching as the activity that best prepared them for the catechetical ministry.

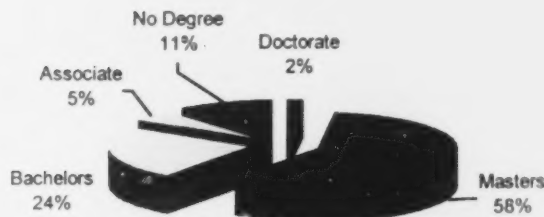
1. Coming up "through the ranks" in parish program (31%)
2. College/university courses (28%)
3. Working with other DREs/catechetical leaders (21%)
4. Diocesan workshops (8%)
5. Internship (2%)
6. National Workshops (1%)
7. Other (10%)

• Least Prepared

Administration continues to be the area in which most NPCD members judge themselves to be least prepared to begin their ministry. There has been no significant change in this listing since the 1986 survey.

1. Administration (30%)
2. Pastoral ministry (22%)
3. Theology (21%)
4. Educational theory (15%)
5. Religious education/catechesis (2%)
6. Other (10%)

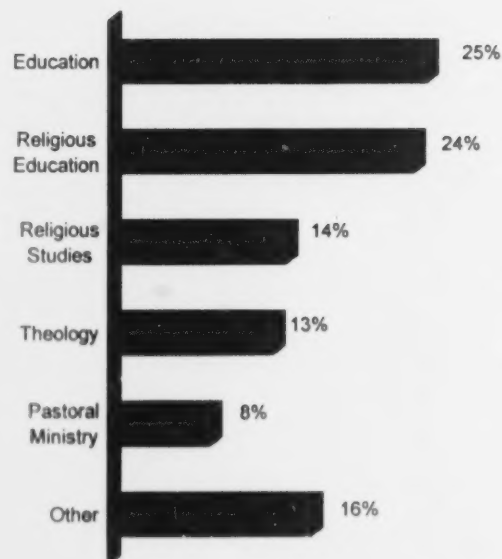
• Earned Degrees



The majority of NPCD members have completed graduate work at the master's level. Eleven percent of the catechetical leaders do not have an academic degree compared to 9% in 1992.

• Degree Majors

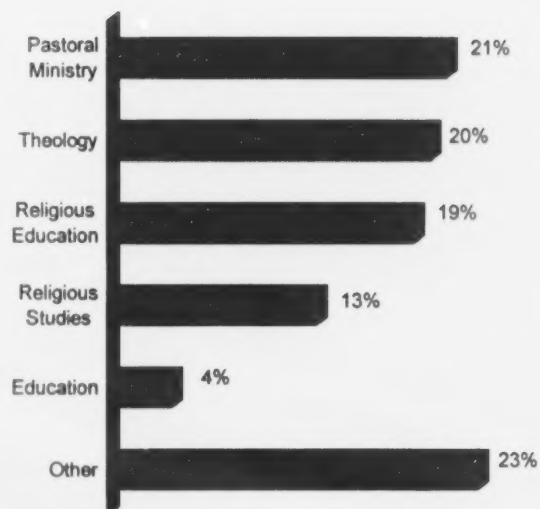
Of those members who do have degrees, religious education and education are the two majors that account for nearly 50% of the earned degrees. A surprising finding is that of the 211 members who are currently pursuing an academic degree, the percentage who are majoring in religious education has dropped from 25% in 1992 to 19% in 1996. In response to a question that asked if a master's degree should be required of all persons who claim the title of Director of Religious Education (DRE), 53% say "No."



• Degrees Being Pursued

Since 1992 the percentage of those who are pursuing a Master's in pastoral ministry has increased from 12% to 21%.

In the "Other" category, the most frequently cited degrees being pursued are, as in previous years, psychology, counseling, adult education and administration. Ironically, even though the percentage of catechetical leaders pursuing degrees in pastoral ministry has increased and the percentage of leaders pursuing religious education degrees has decreased, 44% of the membership indicate that religious education is the *most appropriate* area of study for a person who wants to be a catechetical leader.



The three reasons for pursuing a master's degree which account for 80% of the responses of those who have obtained a master's degree or who wish to obtain one, are: (1) Professional growth and enrichment—30%; (2) Increasing personal competence—27%; and (3) Personal growth and enrichment—23%.

The four main reasons given by members for not pursuing a master's degree are (1) Lack of time—25%; (2) Lack of an undergraduate degree—23%; (3) Lack of funds—16%; and (4) No foreseeable financial reward for investment—11%.

At least 50% of NPCD members continue their formal education using the following means: local (82%), regional (76%), and national (61%) workshops and diocesan formation/certification programs (66%). Thirty-eight percent indicate that they use college/university courses to continue their formal education in the ministry.

• Areas of Responsibility in the Parish

The majority of NPCD members have as their primary areas of responsibility sacramental preparation programs and elementary religious education programs. The area of adult education is the responsibility of one-third of the respondents.

Areas Least Responsible for in the Parish

Reconciliation	92%
First Communion	92%
Elementary religious education program	82%
Training for catechetical ministries	77%
Confirmation	76%
Youth Religious Education	66%
Catechumenate adapted for children	63%
Pre-school programs	61%
Family programs	53%
Vacation Bible school	51%

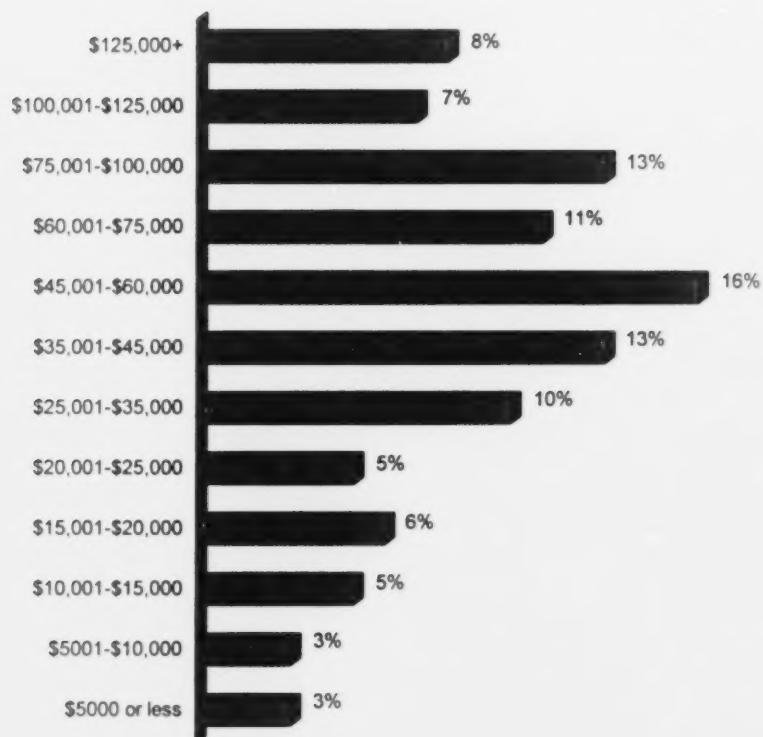
Areas Most Responsible for in the Parish

Children's Liturgy of the Word	43%
Youth Retreats	41%
RCIA	39%
Adult Bible Study	37%
Other Adult Programs	36%
Baptismal Program	31%
Religious education in parochial school	17%
Adult retreats	17%
Training for liturgical ministries	12%
Parish renewal program	8%
Released-time	7%
Marriage preparation	7%
Training for social services ministries	4%
Other (most often programs for mentally and physically challenged)	14%

PART THREE – Parish Religious Education Budgets

- **Current Budgets**

In 1992, 46% of NPCD members served in parishes that had religious education budgets (including salaries) ranging from \$25,000 to \$60,000. Thirty percent had budgets (including salaries) that exceeded \$60,000. In 1996, 39% of the parish budgets fall into each of these

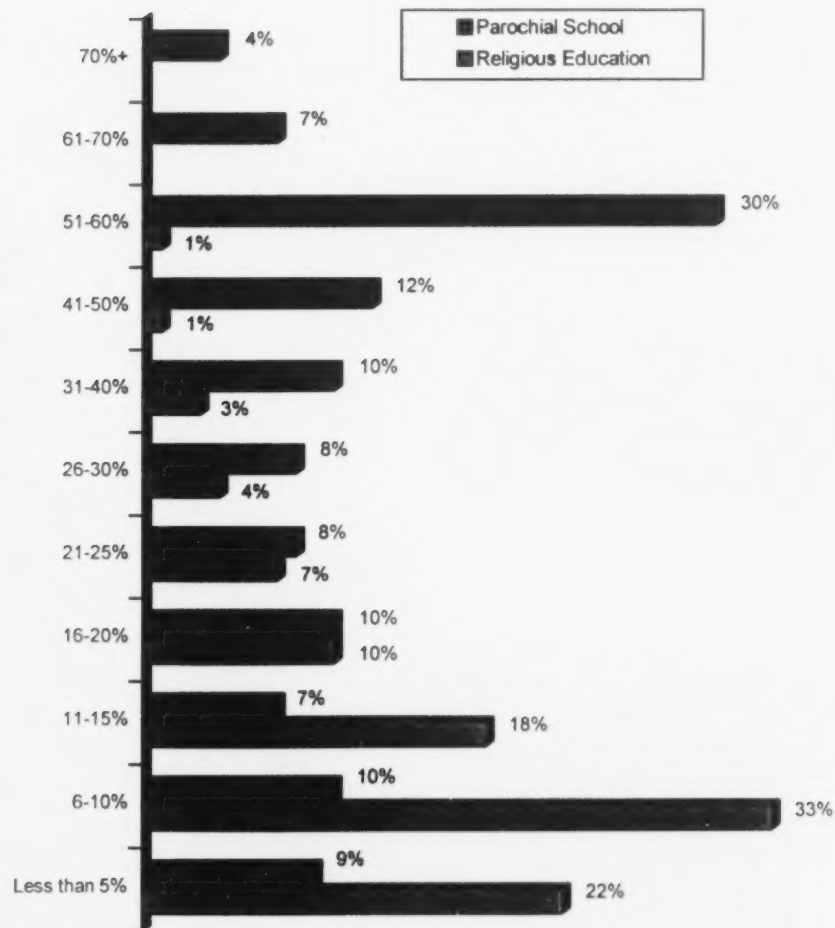


ranges. The percentage of members reporting "Don't know" to the dollar amount of their parish's religious education program is 11%. This is similar to the percentage in 1992.

- **Percentage of Parish Budget Allocated for Parish RE Programs and Parochial Schools**

Sixty-nine percent of the members know what percentage of the parish budget is allocated for their religious education program. Seventy-three percent of these indicate that 15% or less is budgeted for the religious education program.

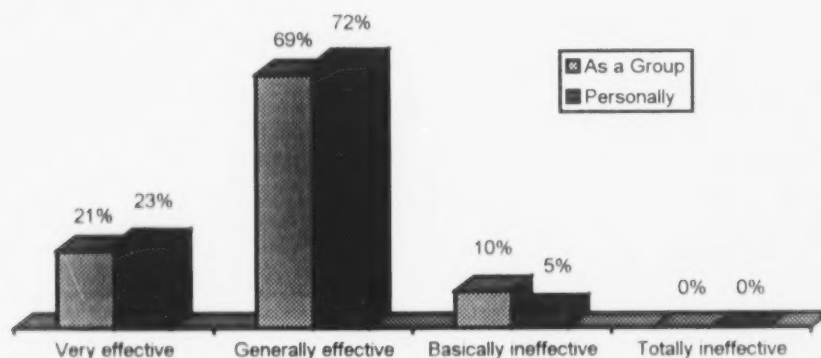
Of the 517 NPCD members who have a parochial school in their parish, 35% report "Don't know" to the dollar amount of the parish budget allocated for the school. Twenty-four percent indicate that the amount allocated exceeds 50% of the parish budget.



PART FOUR – Catechetical Effectiveness

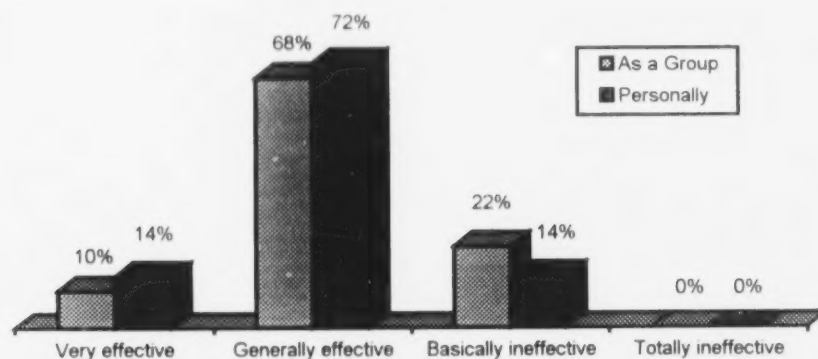
• Catechetical Programs

Two sets of two questions each focused on the effectiveness of catechetical programming over the past 30 years. The first set of two questions asked the respondents to assess the effectiveness of catechetical leaders'/DREs' formal efforts since Vatican II to hand on the Catholic tradition, and then to assess their personal efforts to do the same. In general, NPCD members consider these efforts both as a group (90%) and personally (95%) to be either *generally effective* or *very effective*.



• Catechist Formation

The second set of two questions focused on catechist formation. It asked the respondents to rate catechetical leaders' effectiveness in this area and then their own personal efforts. Again, as a group members judged themselves both collectively (78%) and personally (86%) to have been quite successful.



- **Criteria for Assessing Effectiveness**

From a listing of 18 items, the membership was asked to identify the five most important criteria for assessing the effectiveness of parish K-12 catechetical programs.

Two new items were added to the survey, and both appear in the listing of the five most important criteria. They are *Ability to relate faith/belief to life situations* and *Demonstration of care for others*. These two items replaced *Involvement in social justice issues and activities* and *Other* which were ranked as numbers 4 and 5 respectively in the 1992 survey.

The following is a listing of the top five criteria for assessing effectiveness and the percentage of NPCD members that chose each.

Five Most Important Criteria for Assessing Effectiveness	
1. Ability to relate faith/belief to life situations	91%
2. Ability to think critically about religious matters	64%
3. Demonstration of care for others	62%
4. Participation at Sunday Mass	58%
5. Ability to articulate why one is Catholic	52%

PART FIVE – Catechetical Concerns

• Most Pressing Catechetical Concern

Members were asked to select from a listing of ten items including "other," what they consider to be the most pressing catechetical concern as we approach the millenium. The fact that no one item is selected by a quarter of the respondents shows that there is no consensus on the most pressing catechetical concern.

Five Most Pressing Catechetical Concerns	
1. Adult education	21%
2. Parental involvement	19%
3. Need for alternative models	15%
4. Effectiveness of parish programs	14%
5. Changing family patterns	14%

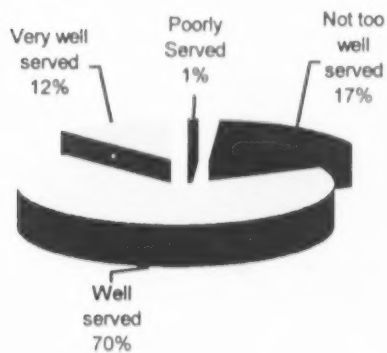
• Most Pressing Professional Concern

Members were also asked to select from a listing of eight items including "other," what they consider to be the most pressing *professional* concern for catechetical leaders/DREs as we approach the millenium. Only one item was selected by more than a quarter of the respondents and that was the credibility of the catechetical leader.

Five Most Pressing Professional Concerns	
1. Credibility of the role of the catechetical leader	36%
2. Need for credentialed catechetical leaders	24%
3. Adequate compensation	12%
4. Relationship to pastors	10%
5. Graying of the profession	10%

PART SIX – NPCD Services

• Satisfaction with Services



More than 80% of the members considered themselves *well served* to *very well served* by the National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors.

• Most Valuable Services

The services that were selected by more than 10% of the membership as being valuable are listed in the following table.

Most Valuable Services of NPCD	
1. NPCD Newsletter	53%
2. Publications	50%
3. NPCD National DRE Convocation	38%
4. Momentum	28%
5. Networking	21%
6. Advocacy for Members	18%
7. Regional Institutes	14%
8. Member Discounts	11%

PART SEVEN – Popular Beliefs Revisited

As was pointed out in *A Hopeful Horizon*, important decisions can often be made on the basis of popular belief, and popular belief may not always be correct. In the following section some of the still prevalent popular beliefs identified in that study are assessed in light of the current survey results.

- **Popular Belief #1: - Those who are responsible for parish religious education programs do not favor the title DRE.**

Not true in 1992 and still not true. The title for 71% of those who responded in the current survey and for 70% of the NPCD members over the seven years of the *Progressive Study* is *Director of Religious Education* (DRE). We even tried to avoid biasing the membership by using the term *catechetical leader* in the survey questionnaire.

- **Popular Belief #2: - DREs are an aging population.**

Not true, but this has to be qualified. Realizing that 87% of the NPCD membership are women, it is necessary to distinguish between married women (the growth area for catechetical leaders) and religious sisters (a diminishing market). In the *Progressive Study* the laity tended to cluster in the 40-49 age-range, while religious cluster in 50-59 age-range, so with a growth in the number of laity, DREs are not an aging population. This is dramatically illustrated in the current survey. Thirteen percent of the religious women fall in 40-49 age-bracket, while 40% of the lay women's ages are in this range. At the upper end of the scale, forty-one percent of the religious women are in the 60-69 age-bracket as compared to only 10% of the lay women. So as a profession, catechetical leaders, at least those who are members of the NPCD, are not growing older. This is due to the increasing number of lay women entering the ministry. The median age of religious sisters who serve in this ministry continues to rise.

- **Popular Belief #3: - There are no new people coming into the field.**

In the *Progressive Study* this was not true. There were new people coming into the field. Twenty percent of all NPCD members were within their first three years of employment over the seven years of that study. This does not appear to be the case in 1996. The recent survey shows only 12% of the members in their first three years of employment as catechetical leaders. There were indicators of a decline over the seven years of the *Progressive Study* (1986-21%, 1989-19%, and 1992-19%), but nothing as dramatic as the 1996 result. So, there are new people coming into the field, but the percentage has declined rather dramatically among NPCD members since 1992.

- **Popular Belief #4: - Parishes pay men more money than they pay women.**

True in the *Progressive Study* and still true. Men make higher salaries than women do. When salaries are compared, as they were in *A Hopeful Horizon*, between men and women who work full-time, have masters' degrees, and indicate that they depend on their salary as the primary family income, 20% of the men and 4% of the women make salaries in excess of \$42,000. In the 1992 survey this percentage was 51% of the men's salaries and 42% of the women's falling into the highest salary range (\$27,001+).

- **Popular Belief #5: - DREs don't last very long in their positions.**

Not true. Sixty-nine percent of the current catechetical leaders have been in their present position for four years or more as compared to 59% (1986), 61% (1989), and 62% (1992).

- **Popular Belief #6: - DREs work only during the school year**

NPCD members do not work just during the school year. Over the span of these surveys more than two-thirds of these catechetical leaders have worked a twelve-month year. The catechetical ministry is for most NPCD members a year-round ministry.

- **Popular Belief #7: - DREs used to be better educated than they are today.**

In *A Hopeful Horizon* it was reported that across all seven years of the progressive study, the percentage of NPCD members with earned degrees remained constant. This was based on the finding that, on average, 64% of those surveyed held master's or doctoral degrees. This year we find that the percentage is 60% holding masters or doctoral degrees, which is similar to the 1989 survey results. Statistically speaking, in the five years since the *Progressive Study* was completed, there has been no noticeable drop in the educational level of NPCD members.

The question needs to be asked--Are catechetical leaders who are well educated more likely to join a national organization like NPCD? This may be the case. One thousand six hundred fifty-eight surveys were mailed to NPCD members, and it is projected that there are approximately 8,000 persons responsible for catechetical programs in the United States. So the concern that is expressed by many diocesan directors, that the educational level of parish catechetical leaders is dropping, may be true. But it is not true for NPCD members.

- **Popular Belief #8: - Education commissions are dying out.**

In *A Hopeful Horizon* we said that it was hard to tell. There was a 5% decline in the number of education commissions over the seven years of the study. Fifty percent of the parishes had an education commission or board at the time the last survey was conducted in 1992. The decline continues. Forty-six percent of the catechetical leaders in the present survey indicate that they work in parishes where there is an education commission or board. The number of parishes with education commissions and boards is not only not increasing; it is actually declining.

- **Popular Belief #9: - DREs spend most of their time with children's programs.**

True for NPCD members. Nine of the top ten responsibilities identified in the current survey are children's programs. And the one that is not, training for catechetical ministries, is closely related. The job responsibilities held by at least 82% of catechetical leaders center on children's sacramental preparation and elementary religious education programs.

- **Popular Belief #10: - Adult education is a priority for catechetical leaders.**

Yes and no. Twenty-one percent of the 1996 respondents indicate that adult education is the most pressing catechetical concern as we approach the millenium. And while the major portion of NPCD members' time and effort goes into programs or activities that center on programming for children there are few child-centered programs that do not require some type of adult education (parent classes, catechist formation, et al.). In addition, some NPCD members already have time allocated for specifically adult oriented programs, viz., RCIA (39%), Adult Bible Study (37%), Adult Retreats (16%), Training for Liturgical Ministries (8%), Parish Renewal Program (8%), Marriage Preparation (7%), and Training for Social Services Ministries (4%).

- **Popular Belief #11: - Only the larger parishes can afford to hire a DRE.**

This question as posed cannot be definitively answered, even though an answer was given in *A Hopeful Horizon*. *A Hopeful Horizon* states that there appears to be some truth to the statement. The authors arrive at this conclusion because in 1992, 75% of the members who responded served in parishes of over 1000 households. This would indicate that DREs tend to be found in larger parishes. Thus, the conclusion that large parishes are the parishes that can afford to pay a DRE's salary (in this survey, 73% of the DREs serve in parishes of more than 1000 households).

However, the only way to know for sure is to identify all of the smaller and larger parishes in the country and find out if they have a catechetical leader/DRE. Barring this, it seems reasonable, based on the data, to conclude that in most cases it is the larger parishes that can afford to have a full-time qualified catechetical leader. Certainly all of the surveys have shown that the highest salaries are paid in the larger parishes.

- **Popular Belief #12: - Parish religious education programs get less parish monies than the parochial schools.**

Generally true. In 1992, 56% of the schools in the parishes represented in the surveys received between 20% and 60% of the parish budget, while 82% of the religious education programs received 20% or less of the parish budget. Similarly in 1996, 51% of the schools receive between 21% and 60% of the parish budget while 83% of the religious education programs receive 20% or less of the same budget (55% receive 10% or less).

- **Popular Belief #13: - Religious education programs are ineffective.**

This is a tough belief to critique. The current survey results would indicate that NPCD members think that it is false. They believe they have done a good job over the past thirty years and are continuing to do an even better one. A rating of 90 percent on overall effectiveness is a B on anyone's grading scale and a 95 is an A. Excellent grades! If the perceptions are accurate, the popular belief is wrong.

In the three previous surveys, NPCD members were asked to rate the effectiveness of the prevalent K-12 structure (class one hour, once a week, thirty times a year, with a volunteer catechist). One third of the catechetical leaders considered the model to be *basically* or *totally* ineffective. If one extrapolates from that, one comes up with a letter grade of 65%. In other words, they would receive a failing grade in effectiveness.

This popular belief is probably both true and false. But it needs a lot more study.*

* See "The Changing Face of the Parish Catechetical Leader: Program Effectiveness" in *NPCD News* (December 1997): 2-4.

PART EIGHT – Conclusion

Since the publication of *A Hopeful Horizon: A Progressive Study of Parish DRE's Training and Educational Needs* in 1993, there have been no dramatic changes in the composition of the NPCD membership and thus in the profile of parish catechetical leaders. Many of the trends that were evident in that study – the prevalence of the title DRE, lay women filling the ranks while the number of religious women declines, employment on the basis of 40 hours or more a week, a steady increase in salaries, men proportionally receiving higher salaries than women, 'coming up through the ranks' as the best preparation for the ministry, and major responsibilities focusing on sacramental preparation and elementary religious education programs – continue.

What this study did discover is that despite the prevalent criticism that one hears and reads regarding the effectiveness of the catechetical enterprise over the past thirty years, catechetical leaders do not share in this negative assessment. In their judgment, efforts since the close of Vatican II to train catechists and to hand on the Catholic tradition have been *generally effective to very effective*.

As the Twentieth Century comes to a close and a new millenium looms on the horizon, catechetical leaders perceive themselves as moving in the right direction. They assess their efforts over the past thirty years to have been effective. They also believe that they have been well served through their membership in the National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors (NPCD). It would appear that as these catechetical leaders look to the future they continue to see a hopeful horizon.

APPENDIX – NPCD Membership Questionnaire, 1996

NPCD MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE, 1996

This is a follow-up to *A Hopeful Horizon: A Progressive Study of Parish DREs' Training and Educational Needs* which was completed in 1993. As we find ourselves on the verge of the new millennium, it seems only proper to assess where we are with regard to parish catechetical leaders and parish catechetical programming. Please take a few minutes now or within the next few days to complete this questionnaire. All questions should be answered. Our hope is that you can return the completed questionnaire to the NCEA offices within a week's time. The deadline date for returning all questionnaires is November 22, 1996.

Information from this questionnaire will help us provide you and all NPCD members with appropriate services. It will also provide a national profile of parish catechetical leaders and their ministry that will be of value to the wider Church in her efforts to provide for effective catechetical ministry throughout the United States.

Circle the appropriate code number for each item.

A. Which of the following is your title as catechetical leader in the parish?

1. DRE (Director of Religious Education)
2. CRE (Coordinator of Religious Education)
3. ARE (Administrator of Religious Education)
4. MRE (Minister of Religious Education)
5. Pastoral Minister
6. Other (please specify) _____

B. Indicate your gender.

1. Male
2. Female

C. Indicate the range in which your age falls.

1. Under 20 years
2. 20-29 years
3. 30-39 years
4. 40-49 years
5. 50-59 years
6. 60-69 years
7. 70+ years

D. Indicate your marital status.

1. Single
2. Married
3. Divorced
4. Separated
5. Widowed

E. Indicate your ecclesial status.

1. Lay
2. Religious order
3. Permanent Deacon
4. Priest

F. Indicate the number of years you have been employed in any parish as a catechetical leader.

1. First year
2. 2-3 years
3. 4-5 years
4. 6-8 years
5. 9-11 years
6. 12-15 years
7. 16-20 years
8. 21-24 years
9. 25+ years

G. Indicate how many years you have been in your present parish position.

1. First year
2. 2-3 years
3. 4-5 years
4. 6-8 years
5. 9-11 years
6. 9-11 years
7. 12-15 years
8. 16-20 years
9. 21-24 years
10. 25+ years

H. Indicate your manner of employment.

1. Full-time (paid on the basis of working 40 hours or more a week).
2. Part-time (paid on the basis of working less than 40 hours per week).
3. Full-time volunteer (working 40 hours or more per week but no pay or minimal stipend—\$500 or less)
4. Part-time volunteer (working less than 40 hours per week with no pay or minimal stipend—\$500 or less).

I. Indicate the range that reflects your 1996-97 annual salary/stipend.

1. Less than \$500
2. \$500-\$2,000
3. \$2,001-\$5,000
4. \$5,001-\$8,000
5. \$8,001-\$12,000
6. \$12,001-\$15,000
7. \$15,001-\$18,000
8. \$18,001-\$21,000
9. \$21,001-\$24,000
10. \$24,001-\$27,000
11. \$27,001-\$30,000
12. \$30,001-\$33,000
13. \$33,001-\$36,000
14. \$36,001-\$39,000
15. \$39,001-\$42,000
16. \$42,001-\$45,000
17. \$45,000+

J. Indicate your satisfaction with your annual salary/stipend.

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Not too satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied

K. Indicate if your salary is the primary income for your household.

1. Yes
2. No

L. Indicate the number of households that belong to your parish.

1. under 250
2. 251-500
3. 501-750
4. 751-1000
5. 1001-1500
6. 1501-2000
7. 2001-2500
8. 2501-3000
9. 3001-3500
10. 3501-4000
11. 4001+

M. Indicate the approximate percentage of the parish budget that is designated for religious education/catechetical programming (exclude any Catholic school budget).

1. Less than 5%
2. 6%-10%
3. 11%-15%
4. 16%-20%
5. 21%-25%
6. 26%-30%
7. 31%-40%
8. 41%-50%
9. More than 50%
10. Don't know

N. Indicate the approximate percentage of the parish budget that is designated for the Catholic school(s).

1. No Catholic school(s)
2. Less than 5%
3. 6%-10%
4. 11%-15%
5. 16%-20%
6. 21%-25%
7. 26%-30%
8. 31%-40%
9. 41%-50%
10. 51%-60%
11. 61%-70%
12. More than 70%
13. Don't know

O. Indicate the range within which your current parish religious education/catechetical budget falls (include salaries).

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. under \$5,000 | 8. \$45,001-\$60,000 |
| 2. \$5,001-\$10,000 | 9. \$60,001-\$75,000 |
| 3. \$10,001-\$15,000 | 10. \$75,001-\$100,000 |
| 4. \$15,001-\$20,000 | 11. \$100,001-\$125,000 |
| 5. \$20,001-\$25,000 | 12. \$125,000+ |
| 6. \$25,001-\$35,000 | 13. Don't know |
| 7. \$35,001-\$45,000 | |

P. Circle the number of each of the following benefits that are available to you in your employing parish.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Housing or housing allowance | 8. Medical insurance |
| 2. Car | 9. Dental insurance |
| 3. Travel allowance | 10. Retirement plan |
| 4. Continuing education allowance | 11. Life insurance |
| 5. Retreat allowance | 12. Professional membership allowance |
| 6. Paid vacation | 13. Other (please specify) _____ |
| 7. Sick leave plan | |

Q. Indicate if you have a written contract.

1. Yes 2. No

R. Indicate how many months of the year you are employed.

1. 9 or fewer 3. 11 months
2. 10 months 4. 12 months

S. Does your parish have a Catholic school?

1. Yes 2. No

T. Indicate if your parish has an education board/commission for parish religious education.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Yes, a separate board | 4. Yes, combined with Catholic school board/commission |
| 2. No | |
| 3. In process of forming one | |

U. Indicate the area in which you were *least prepared* to begin as a catechetical leader.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Administration | 5. Pastoral ministry |
| 2. Theology | 6. Other (please specify) _____ |
| 3. Educational theory | |
| 4. Religious education/Catechesis | |

V. Indicate which one of the following *best prepared* you for your ministry as a catechetical leader.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Coming up "through the ranks" in parish program | 5. Working with other DREs/Catechetical leaders |
| 2. College/university courses | 6. Internship |
| 3. Diocesan workshops | 7. Other (please specify) _____ |
| 4. National workshops | |

W. Circle the number of each of the following programs for which you are responsible in your parish.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Youth religious education programs (REP) | 16. RCIA |
| 2. Released-time program | 17. Catechumenate adapted for children |
| 3. Marriage preparation | 18. Training for catechetical ministries |
| 4. Elementary REP | 19. Training for liturgical ministries |
| 5. Family programs | 20. Training for social services ministries |
| 6. Baptismal program | 21. Parish renewal program (RENEW) |
| 7. First Communion | 22. Other adult programs |
| 8. First Reconciliation | 23. Children's liturgy of the Word |
| 9. Confirmation | 24. Other (please specify) _____ |
| 10. Youth retreats | |
| 11. REP in Catholic schools | |
| 12. Preschool programs | |
| 13. Vacation Bible school | |
| 14. Adult Bible study | |
| 15. Adult retreats | |

X. Indicate your highest achieved academic degree.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. No academic degree | 4. Masters degree |
| 2. Associate degree | 5. Doctorate |
| 3. Bachelor's degree | |

Y. Indicate the major for your highest *achieved* degree. If you have a double major, circle the area that you judge to be most influential in your ministry as a catechetical leader.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Do not have an academic degree | 5. Theology |
| 2. Religious Education | 6. Education |
| 3. Religious Studies | 7. Other (please specify) _____ |
| 4. Pastoral Ministry | |

Z. Indicate the major for the degree you are *currently pursuing*.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Not working toward a degree | 5. Theology |
| 2. Religious Education | 6. Education |
| 3. Religious Studies | 7. Other (please specify) _____ |
| 4. Pastoral Ministry | |

AA. Indicate the statement that best states your reason for *not pursuing* a masters degree.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Already have or pursuing an advanced degree. | 7. Diocese does not require it |
| 2. Do not have an undergraduate degree | 8. Not required by my parish |
| 3. Lack of funds | 9. Do not think advanced degree is necessary |
| 4. Lack of time | 10. Do not want to commit to the time and effort involved |
| 5. No foreseeable financial reward for investment | 11. Other (please specify) _____ |
| 6. No programs available in my area | |

BB. Indicate the ways in which you continue your formal education as a catechetical leader.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. College/university courses | 4. National workshops |
| 2. Diocesan formation/certification programs | 5. Regional workshops |
| 3. Extended institutes (e.g. four to six weeks) | 6. Local workshops |
| | 7. Other (please specify) _____ |

CC. If you obtained or wish to pursue a masters degree, circle the statement that best identifies your motivation.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Gaining professional status | 6. Pursuing professional growth/enrichment |
| 2. Increasing my competence | 7. Pursuing personal growth/enrichment |
| 3. Improving salary | 8. Other (please specify) |
| 4. Gaining job security | |
| 5. Achieving diocesan certification or standards | |

DD. Indicate the area of study you consider *most appropriate* for a person who wants to be a parish catechetical leader.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Would not recommend that they get a degree | 5. Theology |
| 2. Religious Education | 6. Education |
| 3. Religious Studies | 7. Administration |
| 4. Pastoral Ministry | 8. Other (please specify) |

EE. Indicate whether you think a masters degree should be required of all persons who claim the title of DRE.

1. Yes 2. No

FF. Indicate how effective you think catechetical leaders'/DREs' efforts have been to *formally hand on the Catholic tradition* since Vatican II.

1. Very effective 3. Basically ineffective
2. Generally effective 4. Totally ineffective

GG. Indicate how effective you think *your present efforts* are in formally handing on the Catholic tradition.

1. Very effective 3. Basically ineffective
2. Generally effective 4. Totally ineffective

HH. Indicate how effective parish catechetical leaders' efforts at catechist formation have been over the past thirty years.

1. Very effective 3. Basically ineffective
2. Generally effective 4. Totally ineffective

II. Indicate how effective *your efforts* at catechist formation have been.

1. Very effective 3. Basically ineffective
2. Generally effective 4. Totally ineffective

Please indicate your (arch)diocese:

State: _____

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY

Please fold, tape closed and return to:
National Catholic Educational Association
Attn: Dr. Barbara F. Campbell
1077 30th Street, NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20007-3852

RETURN DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 22, 1996

JJ. Circle what you consider to be the *five most important* criteria for assessing the effectiveness of parish K-12 catechetical programs.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Participation at Sunday Mass | 11. Ability to read the Bible intelligently |
| 2. Ability to articulate why one is a Catholic | 12. Demonstration of knowledge of the life of Mary and the saints |
| 3. Ability to use religious terminology | 13. Involvement in social justice issues and activities |
| 4. Memorized prayers | 14. Knowledge of the <i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> |
| 5. Devotional practices (rosary, devotions) | 15. Demonstration of care for others |
| 6. Ability to think critically about religious matters | 16. Knowledge of Church's social justice teachings |
| 7. Ability to explain Church doctrine | 17. Ability to relate faith/belief to life situations. |
| 8. Ability to articulate Bible stories/passages | 18. Other (please specify) |
| 9. Memorization of a Creed | |
| 10. Ability to articulate Church's position on moral issues. | |

KK. Indicate what you consider the most pressing *catechetical* concern as we approach the millennium.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Effectiveness of parish programs | 8. Adult education |
| 2. Polarization in the Church | 9. Relationship between Catholic schools and parish catechetical programs |
| 3. Catechist formation | 10. Other (please specify) |
| 4. Parental involvement | |
| 5. Recruitment of catechists | |
| 6. Changing family patterns | |
| 7. Need for alternative models | |

LL. Indicate what you consider the most pressing *professional concern* for catechetical leaders/DREs as we approach the millennium.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Need for credentialed catechetical leaders | 6. Credibility of the role of catechetical leader |
| 2. Relationship to pastors | 7. Adequate compensation |
| 3. Relationship to parochial schools | 8. Other (please specify) |
| 4. Graying of the profession | |

MM. Indicate how long you have been a member of NPCD.

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. First year | 6. Six years |
| 2. Two years | 7. Seven years |
| 3. Three years | 8. Eight years |
| 4. Four years | 9. Nine years |
| 5. Five years | 10. Ten years or more |

NN. Indicate how well NPCD has served you during this period.

1. Very well served 3. Not too well served
2. Well served 4. Poorly served

OO. Indicate the NPCD services that you find most valuable.

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Publications | 8. Advocacy for members |
| 2. NPCD Newsletter | 9. <i>Momentum</i> |
| 3. Networking | 10. NPCD National DRE Convocation |
| 4. Member discounts | 11. Other (please specify) |
| 5. Insurance programs | |
| 6. Regional Institutes | |
| 7. Awards programs | |



National Catholic Educational Association
1077 30th Street, NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20007-3852
(202) 337-6232; fax (202) 333-6706
www.ncea.org